

SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 30(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 5/6/06

Referred: Today's Calendar

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES JOULE, Berkowitz, Kerttula, Samuels, Ramras, Foster, Guttenberg, Moses, Gardner, Kapsner, Seaton, Croft, Gruenberg

SENATORS Olson, Elton, Ellis

A RESOLUTION

1 **Creating an Alaska Climate Impact Assessment Commission.**

2 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

3 **WHEREAS** recent weather patterns have created warming trends that have
4 jeopardized the health and well-being of residents of communities and the natural resources
5 on which they rely; and

6 **WHEREAS** flooding and erosion negatively affect coastal and river communities in
7 both rural and urban areas of the state; and

8 **WHEREAS** coastal communities are negatively affected by flooding and erosion
9 because of delayed formation of protective shore ice in the fall; and

10 **WHEREAS** communities along riverbanks or in river deltas are more susceptible to
11 flooding and erosion caused by ice jams, snow and glacial melts, rising sea levels, changing
12 river patterns, and heavier rainfall; and

13 **WHEREAS** permafrost is found beneath approximately 80 percent of the state; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in recent years, there has been widespread thawing of permafrost in
15 some areas, causing land to slump and erode, which in turn has caused serious damage to
16 roads, buildings, and other infrastructure; and

1 **WHEREAS** the thawing of the permafrost is likely to continue, which will have a
2 continuing negative effect on future structures and development; and

3 **WHEREAS** fish and wildlife habitats are changing, affecting the accessibility and
4 viability of certain species; and

5 **WHEREAS** resource development and the revenue it generates are potentially
6 negatively affected by the effects of climate change; and

7 **WHEREAS** the rapidly retreating sea ice affects polar route navigation and has raised
8 security concerns; and

9 **WHEREAS** the state has only one employee working on these issues; and

10 **WHEREAS**, although the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment provides the necessary
11 scientific foundation to assess current effects of climate change in the Arctic, it does not
12 address the economic effects of climate change on the State of Alaska; and

13 **WHEREAS** a comprehensive plan to address these issues, prevent or mitigate
14 negative effects of climate change, and address economic effects on the state will help save
15 lives, protect public health, preserve economic and resource development, and protect
16 valuable infrastructure;

17 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alaska State Legislature that there is created an Alaska
18 Climate Impact Assessment Commission; and be it

19 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall consist of 11 members as
20 follows:

21 (1) two senators appointed by the president of the senate;

22 (2) two representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of
23 representatives; and

24 (3) seven public members appointed jointly by the president of the senate and
25 the speaker of the house of representatives consisting of

26 (A) one member with expertise in climatology or knowledgeable in the
27 area of oceanography;

28 (B) one member who is knowledgeable about Alaska's economy;

29 (C) one member who is knowledgeable in the area of land
30 management or restoration of wildlife and natural resources;

31 (D) one member experienced in arctic and sub-arctic engineering

1 requirements for public highway and facility construction and maintenance;

2 (E) a recognized local expert representing affected Alaska
3 communities;

4 (F) one member who represents affected resource development
5 industries;

6 (G) one member who represents the affected tourism industries; and be
7 it

8 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall select a chairperson from among
9 members of the legislature; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the public members of the commission may receive
11 compensation for per diem or reimbursement for travel or other expenses incurred in serving
12 on the commission; and be it

13 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission may meet during and between
14 legislative sessions; and be it

15 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the House and Senate Resources Committees may
16 assign committee staff to provide support services for the commission; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the commission include the following:

18 (1) assess the current and potential effects of climate warming trends on the
19 citizens, natural resources, public health, and economy of the state, in particular the adverse
20 effects on natural resource development, forest safety, fish and game utilization,
21 transportation, community, and resource development infrastructures;

22 (2) estimate costs to the state and its citizens of adverse effects associated with
23 climate change;

24 (3) identify specific circumstances of flooding and erosion that have affected
25 life, property, and economic and resource development in the state;

26 (4) examine alternative measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of
27 flooding and erosion;

28 (5) develop policies to guide infrastructure investments in Alaska villages,
29 cities, and boroughs that are most affected by flooding and erosion;

30 (6) recommend land use regulations, including area standards for designation
31 of land prone to flooding and erosion;

1 (7) investigate and assess issues involving permafrost and damage caused by
2 permafrost;

3 (8) recommend policies to decrease the negative effects of climate change;
4 and

5 (9) identify and coordinate efforts of mutual concern with federal, state, and
6 local agencies; and be it

7 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall offer recommendations and
8 provide possible solutions and preventative measures that can be implemented by Alaska
9 communities and by the state and federal governments; and be it

10 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall conduct eight hearings
11 throughout the state to fulfill its purpose; and be it

12 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall deliver a preliminary report of its
13 findings to the legislature on March 1, 2007, and make a final report to the legislature on
14 January 10, 2008, together with legislative proposals for consideration; and be it

15 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the commission shall be available for legislative
16 hearing on its final report and recommendations; and be it

17 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the continuation or termination of the commission
18 shall be reevaluated at the Second Regular Session of the Twenty-Fifth Alaska State
19 Legislature.